



July 2006

AWIN Monthly Newsletter

Send us your story

Do you have a story you would like to share with other end users? Any advice you want to pass along to agencies that are awaiting a cutover in their area? We want to know how AWIN is working for you! Please send your comments to awin@arkansas.gov.

AWIN Support

In partnership with the Arkansas State Police, the Department of Information Systems (DIS) operates the AWIN Call Center to support all AWIN subscribers (radio users) with technical assistance or AWIN-related requests. Technicians are on call in the event of any emergency. Call (501) 682-HELP (682-4357) or toll-free (800) 435-7989 or e-mail:

awin.support@arkansas.gov

AWIN lessons learned

It's important for project leaders to evaluate and document how projects were managed and if goals set for the project were met. Recently, the AWIN Management team participated in a Lessons Learned session with the goal of reviewing the ASP upgrade and CSEPP projects. Participating in this session were project team members from major stakeholder agencies, product vendors and Project Quality consultants. Some of the Lessons Learned identified by the team were:

Ensure sound leadership. The State of Arkansas formed the AWIN Steering Committee and Local Leadership Council to advise and guide the work and on-going efforts leading to the AWIN system. This strong leadership helped to ensure that issues were addressed effectively.

Leverage existing assets to build a better system. The State was able to enhance existing infrastructure to develop a solid foundation for the AWIN system. By using the existing infrastructure and the resources available from Department of Homeland Security, the State of Arkansas has developed a radio system that is worth about three times what is invested in it.

Accept delays in the schedule, if it is in the best interest of the project. The project team agreed that delivering a system that works dependably is more important than meeting the schedule.

Ensure that the right resources are identified, and work towards building a team, not working in silos. The development of the AWIN

Steering Committee assisted in building trust and gaining commitments from project stakeholders to assign the correct level of resources. Weekly conference calls and daily stand-up meetings helped to keep the team focused.

Strong and consistent communication throughout the project is essential. Keep communications open. Multiple tools were used to ensure that information about the project was being communicated. Project schedule progress, budgets and issues were reported in monthly status reports to our state legislators. Newsletters, alerts, and a project website were used to provide information to users. Team conference calls and face-to-face meetings kept the team focused on the work to be performed. These tools are still in use to ensure that information on current projects, as well as future projects is available to AWIN users.

Understand what regulatory issues can impact your project. Federal regulatory requirements for projects using grant funding can significantly impact the project schedule.

Have a third party monitor project quality. The State ensured that all team members were meeting their obligations by contracting an independent quality firm to review all work processes and products.



Training session scheduled

The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) will be conducting another AWIN radio training session next month. The next training event will be held in northeast Arkansas. The session is set to take place on **Thursday August 17** at the Craighead County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) at the county's courthouse in Jonesboro from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.

The AWIN users class is designed for emergency management and first responder radio users to help each better understand and integrate the AWIN system into their Command and Control structure and existing radio systems. The class will also help users understand how to gain maximum utilization of the

AWIN radio system in their respective agencies, counties and cities.

The training facility is located in the basement of the Craighead County Courthouse Annex at 511 Union in Jonesboro. If you plan to attend, please contact the Northeast Area Coordinator Anthony Coy at Anthony.coy@adem.state.ar.us or 870-935-3094 by Tuesday August 15th and let him know how many representatives will attend.



Upcoming survey

AWIN program managers are in the process of developing a survey that will be sent to users of the digital radio system in order to gather much needed information. At the latest AWIN Steering Committee, the membership determined that it would like to gather information from users about the AWIN system. A decision was made to develop and disseminate a survey to be filled out by users, to see how the system is working for different agencies and where the system can be improved.

Please make every effort to fill out and return the surveys, which will be delivered in the near future. The information will be used to fix any

deficiencies in the system, and work to better meet end users' needs.

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